

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

March 4, 1998

ALL- COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE
I-13-98

REASONS FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☐ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order or Settlement Agreement
- ☐ Clarification requested by One or
More Counties
- ☒ Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: FEDERAL OFFICE OF REFUGEES RESETTLEMENT (ORR)
REGULATIONS CONSULTATION PROCESS

Enclosed is an announcement from the federal Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) inviting you to participate in the ORR regulations consultation process on setting standards for the Refugee Cash Assistance, Refugee Medical Assistance, and Refugee Employment Services Programs. The enclosed announcement contains a preliminary list of consultation sites and dates. In addition to on-site consultations, ORR plans to host a series of conference calls which have been tentatively scheduled for the week of April 13, 1998. Also, in preparation for the consultations, ORR has developed a list of issues which will serve as the basis of the consultative process.

We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to provide input into the regulations which govern the Refugee Resettlement Program. Also, please feel free to share the enclosed announcement and invitation with other interested parties. If you have any questions regarding the upcoming consultations or the consultative process, please contact one of the ORR Regulations Team Members listed in the enclosed announcement.

Sincerely,


JOHN H. WILSON

Deputy Director

Program Planning and Performance Division

Enclosure



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
370 L'Enfant Promenade, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20447

FEB - 6 1998

Dear Colleague:

This letter is an invitation to participate in the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) regulations consultation process. We are reviewing ORR regulations in light of changes resulting from welfare reform.

Recent welfare and immigration reforms affect refugees and the refugee program in a number of ways. The former Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program has been replaced with the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. However, current ORR regulations require States to determine cash and medical assistance eligibility based on AFDC and Medicaid.

Your participation is important to us as we begin this process. We are interested in hearing from everyone associated with the provision of services for refugees -- State and local refugee and health coordinators, voluntary resettlement agencies, mutual assistance associations, local service providers, representatives from State and local TANF and Medicaid agencies, and organizations involved in the Welfare-to-Work program.

Consultations will be held at selected sites around the country. A preliminary list of sites and dates is enclosed. In addition, we will hold several conference calls in different regions of the country in the next few months. We invite you to participate in the on-site consultations or the telephone conferences.

Also enclosed is a list of some issues which will serve as the basis for the upcoming consultative process. We recommend that you become familiar with the ORR and TANF regulations before participating in the consultation. Enclosed are the web sites where the regulations are located.

After comments from all sources are reviewed, ORR may hold additional consultations on topics which merit further study. When this process is complete, ORR will publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register, at which time you will again have the opportunity to express your views in writing during the public comment period prior to publication of the final regulation.

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If you have any questions regarding the consultations, please contact any of the regulation team members on the enclosed list. A final schedule of on-site consultations will be sent to you in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lavinia Limon". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name and last name clearly distinguishable.

Lavinia Limon
Director
Office of Refugee Resettlement

Enclosures

ORR REGULATIONS ISSUES

ORR has identified the following issues which will serve as the basis for the consultation process. We realize, however, that other issues may be raised and included in the discussion.

I. REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA) :

Currently the ORR regulations pertaining to the RCA program link RCA payment levels, eligibility, etc. to the AFDC program which has been replaced by the TANF program.

Eligibility:

- o Now that TANF has replaced AFDC, how should eligibility for the RCA program be determined?
 - o Should the linkage to AFDC's financial eligibility standards be maintained?
 - o Should RCA eligibility be based on TANF's financial eligibility standards?
 - o Should RCA eligibility be based on some other eligibility standard?

Payment Standard:

- o Now that TANF has replaced AFDC how should the RCA payment standard be determined?
 - o Should the linkage to AFDC's payments standards be maintained?
 - o Should RCA payment standards be based on the States' TANF payment standards?
 - o Should RCA payment standards be based on some other standard?
 - o Should the RCA payment standard include earned income disregards? (currently the RCA payment standard does not include earned income disregards)

Duration:

- o Should the RCA eligibility period be for the same period of time as the RMA eligibility period (as is presently the case)? If not what alternative do you propose?

II. REFUGEE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE (RMA) :

Eligibility:

- o How should eligibility for the RMA program be determined?
 - o Should RMA eligibility continue to be linked to the States' Medicaid financial eligibility standard?
 - o Should RMA eligibility be based on some other financial eligibility standard? If so what should the eligibility be based on?

Duration:

- o Should the RMA eligibility period be for the same period of time as the RCA eligibility period (as is presently the case)? If not what alternative do you propose?

III. SERVICES:

Currently, the ORR regulations require, as a condition for receipt of RCA, a non-exempt refugee to meet several work requirements which include registration for employment services, participation in employability service programs, and acceptance of appropriate offers of employment.

- o Should the current criteria for exemption of the ORR work requirements be revisited? If so what should they be?
 - o Should the ORR work exemptions be linked to the States' TANF work exemptions?
 - o Should there be any work exemptions given the short duration of RCA?

ORR REGULATIONS CONSULTATION SCHEDULE

as of February 9, 1998

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|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. | San Pedro, California
San Pedro Hilton Hotel
2800 Via Cabrillo Marina
(310) 514-3344 | February 25 (Wednesday)
10 a.m. |
| 2. | Seattle, Washington
location to be announced | February 26 (Thursday)
10 a.m. |
| 3. | Miami, Florida
Sheraton Gateway Hotel
3900 N.W. 21st Street
Miami, Florida 33142 | March 6 (Friday)
10 a.m. |
| 4. | Atlanta, Georgia (<i>tentative</i>)
location to be announced | March 13th (Friday)
9 a.m. |
| 5. | New York City, NY (<i>tentative</i>)
location to be announced | March 20 (Friday)
9:30 a.m. |
| 6. | Washington, DC
HHH Building, Room 800
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201 | March 23 (Monday)
1 p.m. |

Note: For building access, if you plan to attend this meeting, please fax your name and affiliation to ORR, FAX No. (202) 401-5487, Attn: Nancy Borders.

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|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 7. | Boston, Massachusetts
location to be announced | March 27 (Friday)
1:30 p.m. |
| 8. | Chicago, Illinois (<i>tentative</i>)
location to be announced | Week of April 6 |
| 9. | Telephone Conference Calls
By geographic area
Times and dates to be announced | Week of April 13 (<i>tentative</i>) |

All meetings are open. You do not need to notify ORR of your intent to attend, except for the Washington, D.C. meeting.

RESOURCES

ORR Regulations Team Members

Please contact one of the following team members if you have questions regarding the consultation process:

Marta Brenden
(202) 205-3589
mbrenden@acf.dhhs.gov

Nguyen Kimchi
(202) 401-4556
nkimchi@acf.dhhs.gov

Barbara Chesnik
(202) 401-4558
bchesnik@acf.dhhs.gov

Carl Rubenstein
(202) 205-5933
crubenstein@acf.dhhs.gov

Pamela Green-Smith
(202) 401-4531
pgreensmith@acf.dhhs.gov

David B. Smith
(301) 443-1774
dbsmith@osophs.dhhs.gov

ORR FAX Numbers: (202) 401-5487; (202) 401-0981

Other

1. ORR regulations (45 CFR 400) may be found at the following web site:

<http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/>

Note: Under "Who We Are", click "List of programs and Websites", then click "Refugee Assistance"

2. Proposed TANF regulations and other welfare reform information may be found at the following web site:

<http://www.acf.gov/>

3. Medicaid information may be found at the following web site:

<http://www.hcfa.gov/>

4. Information on welfare reform may also be found at the following web site:

<http://www.welfareinfo.org>